
❖ PACER Service Center ❖

Announcements

<http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov>

October 2005

Free Written Opinions

In the spirit of the E-Government Act of 2002, modifications have been made to the District Court CM/ECF system to provide our customers with access to written opinions free of charge. The modifications also allow PACER customers to search for written opinions using a new report that is free of charge. Written opinions have been defined by the Judicial Conference as "any document issued by a judge or judges of the court sitting in that capacity, that sets forth a reasoned explanation for a court's decision." The responsibility for determining which documents meet this definition rests with the authoring judge.

This functionality will only be available in courts that have installed District Court CM/ECF version 2.4 or higher, and will only provide free access to opinions filed after the court is actively using version 2.4. There may still be a charge to access opinions that pre-date the court's use of version 2.4. The new report is available under the Reports menu. PACER customers can also access opinions via existing reports and queries, such as the docket report, and will not be billed for accessing the written opinion document itself, but will be billed for the report or query used to identify the document. For example, if a PACER customer runs a docket report, the customer will be charged for the docket report. If the customer then clicks on the document number hyperlink for a written opinion document, the customer will not be charged for viewing the document. Future versions of Bankruptcy CM/ECF will have similar functionality.

Track charges by client code

PACER offers a client code option as customers login to PACER. Client codes are thirty-two character text fields provided for tracking charges. The quarterly statement will only include the total amount due; however, the detailed transactions with client codes are available at the PACER Service Center web site. The **Review Transaction History** option under Account Information at <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov> provides an option to sort and total transactions by client code. These transactions are updated by the 15th of each month. For example, October transactions will be available by November 15.

A client code will not appear on the bill unless it is entered at the time of the transaction. Because the client code feature is optional, usage must be mandated by the customer.

Searching for a Case

There are two efficient and cost effective approaches to finding a case in PACER. If the location of the case is known, click on "Links to PACER Websites" at <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov> to select the link for that court. After logging in at a CM/ECF site, select "Query" from blue tool bar to search by party name, case number, or another available search option. The second approach is searching a broad range of courts when the specific location of a case is not known. Use the U.S. Party/Case Index at <http://pacer.uspci.uscourts.gov> to search a state, all courts in a circuit, or the majority of courts at once. Customers should check the "Courts not included" listing and "Date Range" report under Reports to determine which courts' data is and is not being searched.

Helpful FAQ's: PACER Frequently Asked Questions are located at the PACER Service Center home page <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov>. The FAQ's are updated on a regular basis and may help resolve many common questions.

USPCI: Search Option

In response to requests from the public, functionality was added to the U.S. Party/Case Index that allows a customer to search by the last four digits of the Social Security Number when combined with at least three characters of the last name. Previously, the complete social security number was required. The search functionality at the individual PACER and CM/ECF sites has not changed.

To use the new functionality, login into the U.S. Party/Case Index. From the main menu, click on the "Bankruptcy" search. Enter the last four characters of the social security number along with at least three characters of the last name, then click "Search." If searching with the entire Social Security Number or Tax Identification Number, the party name is not required.

Cap on Case-Related Documents and Reports

The Judicial Conference, at its September 2003 session, amended the language of Section I of the Electronic Public Access Fee Schedule to include docket sheets and case-specific reports, with the exception of transcripts. The previous schedule placed a cap of 30 pages for electronic access to any single document. The cap does not apply to case listings or name search results. While the cap applies to all systems, the transaction receipt will not reflect this change in older PACER and RACER systems and may not be reflected immediately in CM/ECF systems. The quarterly statements will be calculated using the capped transactions.

Questions or Comments regarding information in the announcement?

Email pacer@psc.uscourts.gov or call (800) 676-6856.

Case Management

CM / ECF

Electronic Case Files

Most courts currently utilizing CM/ECF have established a help desk to assist customers. A list of CM/ECF help desk phone numbers is available online. Click on CM/ECF Information at <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov>. Select the "Help" menu option. Also available are Frequently Asked Questions, training modules, and more.



The PACER Service Center hours of operation are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Central time, Monday through Friday and is closed for Federal holidays. Remaining holidays for which the PACER Service Center will be closed are October 10 for Columbus Day, November 11 for Veteran's Day, November 24 for Thanksgiving, and December 26 for Christmas.

Automatic Billing

PACER customers now have the option to sign up for automatic credit card billing. Customers that sign up for this option will have the amount due each quarter charged to a credit card on file with the PACER Service Center without having to visit the web site or call. Balances of \$10 or more are applied to the credit card on file just before payment is due.

At <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov>
Select Account Information
Enter PACER login and password
Select "Sign Up for Automatic Payment"

It is possible to update or change the credit card information on file under this option as well.

Other Billing Info

For your convenience, the PACER Service Center accepts Discover, VISA, MasterCard, and American Express. Login to the Account Information section at <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov> to pay by credit card.

Payment for balances less than \$10 will automatically be deferred until the balance is \$10 or more. No phone call is necessary.

The PACER Service Center's Federal Tax ID Number is 74-2747938.

Effective April 1, 2004 a fee of \$45 will be assessed if a check is returned for non sufficient funds.